

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**MANNING THE LIMES: PREPARING OFFICERS FOR OPERATING ON THE  
STRATEGIC PERIMETER**

by

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## **ABSTRACT**

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What does the U.S. Army need to do to better prepare its officer corps to facilitate operations in the current multi-national and multi-cultural security paradigm? In this paper I intend to study the historical successes and failures of Army operations in light of the cultural preparedness of the officers involved. I will examine areas where better cultural awareness could have facilitated operations. From there I will examine past and present officer preparation in the areas of cultural understanding and linguistics. Looking at recent critiques of officer professional education in these disciplines by the likes of Congressman Skelton, The Army Chief of Staff, and OSD, I will establish a need for adjusting the current program of officer development and training. Using the FAO program as a base I will examine the utility of broader implementation within the officer corps as well as adjustments to current FAO utilization policy. The end product will include specific recommendations on officer selection, accession, development, maintenance and utilization in order to leverage cultural awareness and language skills in today's complex geopolitical environment.



## MANNING THE LIMES: PREPARING OFFICERS FOR OPERATING ON THE STRATEGIC PERIMETER

The end of the Cold War ushered in a new paradigm of conflict in which Armies appear no longer poised to fight on the grand scale envisioned upon the plains of Germany. With Afghanistan and Iraq we have witnessed the reemergence of the emphasis on Military Operations Other than War, counter-insurgencies, and other struggles which at their very core require winning the hearts and minds of indigenous populations. This environment demands leaders that are linguistically capable, culturally aware, and politically savvy, rather than officers who possess the skill sets needed to orchestrate the annihilation of vast Soviet armored columns. The Army needs multi-disciplined leaders that are not only technically proficient in modern martial endeavors, but who also have the ability to communicate with, understand, and relate to allies, adversaries and populations in the areas of operations that will define conflict in the 21st Century. Like the Roman Legions that manned the limes on the perimeter of the Empire, the Army of today finds itself on the strategic perimeter having to deal with the outside world.<sup>1</sup> This environment does and will continue to expose our officers to many cultures and experiences for which they are not currently trained nor adequately prepared. As we come to rely more on the diplomatic skills required of our military officer corps and far less on its kinetic prowess we will have to determine what type of officer will be needed to lead our soldiers operating on the contemporary geostrategic limes. This paper will explore this question and offer recommendations as to how the United States can produce such warrior-statesmen.

### The Problem Defined: Operational Force

There is a growing volume of official and unofficial documents that call for the military to take some action in order to produce this new type of leader. The Joint Staff published a memorandum in the spring of 2005 that discusses this topic in light of Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) Special Areas of Emphasis (SAEs). The first item listed in the document addresses how the military is to improve its countering ideological support for terrorism (CIST) capability. The memo argues that JPME curricula should be developed in part to “challenge students to investigate the tenets of CIST and provide [them] with an awareness of the culture, customs, language and philosophy of the enemy.” This, in turn, would accomplish the final goal of developing future military leaders who are able to “effectively counter extremist ideology driving terrorists and providing cover for [these leaders] to operate within [the terrorists'] society.”<sup>2</sup>

Secretary of the Army Francis J. Harvey and Army Chief of Staff General Peter Schoomaker have weighed in on this issue emphasizing the need for the creation of a corps of leaders within the Army who possess a wider range of talents. Both men advocate the development of "Pentathletes" that are not only skilled in the kinetic art of warfighting, but also well versed in the cultural and linguistic skills required to excel in today's asymmetric environment.<sup>3</sup> Doctrinally, this concept is codified in Joint Publication 5-0 where Combatant Commanders are required to "ensure that all plans include sufficient detail to permit force planning with regard to language and regional expertise." They are further required to "detail operational and contingency needs for language and regional expertise capabilities in headquarters and units," as well as "list shortfalls by number, language, performance objectives and skill level required."<sup>4</sup>

The Defense Department's most recent Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) Report, released in February of 2006, announces that the Department is shifting focus from "Traditional [threat] Challenges" of conventional character to those which are more "Irregular, Catastrophic, and Disruptive."<sup>5</sup> The document goes on to argue that there is a requirement for officers who possess a "broader linguistic capability and cultural understanding" in order to "prevail in the long war and meet 21st century challenges."<sup>6</sup>

The observation that the Army needs to take a serious look at what types of leaders it produces is not limited to those who are in the uniformed services. Representative Ike Skelton, in his remarks of 28 September 2005 at the Dwight D. Eisenhower National Security Conference titled "Beyond Iraq," suggested that the U.S. military may currently be "neglecting the human side" of the transformation equation. In order to remedy this neglect the ranking Democratic Arms Services Committee member advocated increasing emphasis on PME, to include a lengthening in time and a broadening in scope of the curricula offered throughout the entire military education system (all levels). He also went on to emphasize that the "[armed forces] must develop greater cross-cultural understanding at all levels" in order to meet the future security challenges.<sup>7</sup>

The "Pentathlete" issue is also being addressed within the Army staff. The Department of the Army G-5, Strategy, Plans and Policy Directorate has codified the characteristics that should make up the multi-talented Army leaders of the 21st Century. They argue that in the future an officer must be a "strategic and creative thinker; builder of leaders and teams; competent full spectrum warfighter or accomplished professional who supports the Soldier; effective in managing, leading and changing large organizations; skilled in governance, statesmanship, and diplomacy; who understands cultural context, and works effectively across it."<sup>8</sup>

This definition of the "Pentathlete" effectively describes what today's Army's Foreign Area Officer corps (FAO) is supposed to be. There are, however, shortfalls in the current FAO development and utilization system that limit the quantity, quality and effective utilization of these officers. These issues also prevent the program from effectively filling the cultural-linguistic gap that is said to currently exist. The FAO proponent office in the Pentagon argues that there exist shortcomings in the preparation of Foreign Area Officers that are preventing the system from producing the "competent full spectrum warfighter" capability desired in our officers. They posit that this is due in part to the fact that under the current FAO career path young officers are forced to choose to enter the FAO training program and to apply for the corresponding Career Field Designation (CFD) in their sixth or seventh year of service. This means that at a very early point in their careers FAOs are taken out of the operational force, never to return. FAO proponent has accurately described this phenomenon as the creation of a "greening gap," causing FAOs in their later years of service to have very little relevant experience in the very organizations which they are tasked to represent. The proponent is currently proposing to narrow this "gap" by creating FAO-coded positions throughout the force down to Brigade Combat Team (BCT) level. These slots would have FAOs serving as advisors to commanders in the areas of their expertise, allowing for increased cultural awareness and language competency at the tactical and operational level.<sup>9</sup>

At the same time the Army is conducting this review, it is experiencing an officer manning deficit. Already short nearly 2000 captains and majors, the Army currently projects that this shortage could grow to as high as 3500 officers by 2007. In response, the Army has initiated several programs and is considering others intended to not only retain more officers, but also to increase the cultural awareness, linguistic potential and political savvy of the entire officer corps. These programs include offering retention bonuses to some officers, increasing opportunities to attend fully-funded graduate programs, and providing more opportunities for officers to serve tours outside their primary specialty.<sup>10</sup>

What one can conclude from the positions and issues discussed above is that the United States Army has a demand for officers in operational units that are not only technically proficient in warfighting skills, but also culturally and linguistically savvy and adept at performing in the contemporary geopolitical arena. Concurrently those in the Army who are expected to be the warrior statesmen, the FAOs, are in need of additional "greening" and require more operational competence and experience in order to increase credibility and enhance performance. Couple these two realities with the facts that the operational branches are currently short over 800

majors while the FAO proponent is lobbying for increased "green slots" and one is struck by an obvious nexus.

A potential solution to these issues can be reached by having the Army FAO program reestablish the former dual-tracking system. Doing so would provide the required cultural and linguistic expertise throughout the Army (from battalion level higher) while simultaneously giving the experience and training needed (re-greening) for both operational senior level leaders and foreign area officers to better fulfill their required missions. If the following recommendations are adopted such a reorganization could indeed prove to be truly transformational.

One must remember that transformational thinking is not simply limited to the invention and utilization of new technologies. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld argued that often times transformation can be achieved through better, more imaginative use of resources currently at one's disposal. In a speech on the subject presented at the National Defense University (NDU) the Secretary made this point when he stated, "What was revolutionary and unprecedented about the blitzkrieg was not the new capabilities the Germans employed, but rather the unprecedented and revolutionary way that they mixed new and existing capabilities."<sup>11</sup>

When searching for solutions to the "Pentathlete" issue one should not be limited to initiating new programs and organizations or leveraging technology such as giving Army personnel access to Rosetta Stone computer language training. Sometimes true transformation can occur by better utilization of and improvements to systems already available. As with the correlation between the regimental combat teams and the brigade combat teams of the future, sometimes transformation can even manifest itself as a significant modification of past models.

At face value developing the "Pentathlete's" skill set appears to be a daunting task. Fortunately the Army already has a cadre of personnel with these talents in its Foreign Area Officer Program. At the present time, however, this pool of officers is neither being prepared nor utilized to its full capacity. Below we will look at ways to better recruit, train, utilize and expand this valuable resource, subsequently fulfilling the Army's requirement.

#### Recruiting

In order to recruit the finest officers in the Army into the FAO program the Army needs to reinstate dual tracking capability and openly advocate the dual FAO-basic branch track as an extremely valuable asset to the military. A survey of senior FAOs, when asked to indicate whether or not they would have chosen functional area 48 if the current single-track paradigm



was in existence when they were captains, resulted in over fifty percent indicating they would not have chosen to become FAOs.<sup>12</sup> Many of the respondents stated that they believed that service in the operational Army in basic branch positions was the key component in their ability to function in the various duty positions as a foreign area officer. One Colonel's response was typical of those officers who indicated they would not have chosen to single-track:

I believed then as I do today that an Army Officer must be a competent warrior in order to be a good FAO. Likewise, I believe that the Army must have well rounded and experienced FAOs to add ground truth and realistic assessments to the Commander's estimate of the Strategic and Operational environment. Although it is tough to accomplish, dual tracking is a must in order to produce the "Right" Senior Leaders for the Army and the Joint world.<sup>13</sup>

The first action that can be taken to promote and encourage the best and the brightest to consider dual-tracking is for the Army leadership to openly acknowledge the value and desirability of having officers with linguistic talent and cultural understanding spread throughout the force. This could be done through policy statements and increased emphasis on the part of the senior Army leadership. This process has already begun with senior members of the Army promoting the "Pentathlete" concept. With the most senior leaders in the Army arguing for the need to incorporate the skills already possessed by FAOs throughout the force, it is conceivable that being designated a "Pentathlete" could easily be turned into a career enhancement mechanism, not the perceived career killer of the past.

Previously there was a perception that officers who had been designated with the FAO functional area were looked upon in a negative light by their basic branch commanders. There existed a general opinion that FAOs were not treated equally with their peers in the evaluation process and hence were less competitive for promotion. Although this belief seeped into official briefings and memoranda proposing the development of a separate FAO branch, there has never been any empirical data presented to back up the evaluation disparity allegation.<sup>14</sup> Nonetheless, the mere perception of a disparity had the effect of mentors advising officers not to take on the FAO functional secondary specialty for fear of prejudicial treatment in evaluations. Many followed this advice.

One need simply look at the sequencing of company command times, functional area designation and promotion boards in the 1990s to ascertain that failure to obtain promotion to O-4 on the part of the FAO functional area designees had more to do with performance as company commanders than it did with the designation of a secondary specialty/functional area. It simply takes a look at the timing of the boards in relation to the average FAOs training timeline to note that captain FAOs would have been in their 2nd or 3rd year of training at the time of their

O4 selection boards. The evaluations that would have been relevant to promotion board decisions would not - and were not - the one or two academic evaluation reports (AERs) that would have been in the officer's file. The issue was more likely to have been one of the quality and competitiveness of the officers assessed into the FAO program and not some urban myth of command prejudice.

Simultaneous with senior level advocacy, promotion opportunities could be increased (if necessary) by setting floors based on the secondary specialties. In essence, an officer who chose this track would compete within his or her basic branch and then also be eligible for a second look in the 48 functional area. This would institutionally dampen the trepidation experienced by those who would still question the ability of senior raters to render fair evaluations.<sup>15</sup>

Another incentive for recruiting high-quality officers into the FAO program would be to allow increased Foreign Language Proficiency Pay (FLPP) to be given regardless of current duty assignment. In essence, once an officer has completed the FAO training program and is performing to standard on the applicable Defense Language Proficiency Tests (DLPT) he or she should receive the corresponding incentive pay and not be made ineligible when serving in a non-FAO billet.

### Training

The second major area that requires attention regardless of whether or not dual-tracking is reinstituted is the FAO training program. This has recently been a major topic of discussion throughout the FAO community. There have been several staff actions looking at proposals such as the development of "Centers of Excellence" (COE) that would take on the primary responsibility of producing world class FAOs for the Army. In January 2005 Major General Keith Dayton, then Director of Strategy, Plans and Policy, called for further staffing and development of the COE concept in order to potentially take advantage of consolidation of several phases of training for "appreciable advantages over the current approach and an enhanced return on the Army's investment."<sup>16</sup>

The Department of the Army Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate produced a "Staffing Concept Brief" reference this topic on 18 March 2005. In this document they described a Foreign Area Officer Center of Excellence as "a training hub which consolidates three of the four FAO training elements at one geographic site." These elements were further enumerated as Basic Language Training (BLT), Advanced Language Training (ALT), Advanced Civil Schooling (ACS), and Intermediate Level Education (ILE).<sup>17</sup>

The Army Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate staff considered five separate courses of action for future initial level FAO preparation. These included building a COE around either the Defense Language Institute (DLI) and Naval Postgraduate School (NPS) at Monterey, California; at the regional facilities such as the George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies; at the National Defense University; or at the Combatant Commands; with the fifth option being to retain the current training structure.<sup>18</sup> In the end FAO Proponent's decision was to opt for the fifth course of action which provided for very little to no change in the current structure. The primary reason given for this is contained in the following quote from the FAO Proponent's November 2005 Newsletter:

Proponent spent many months studying the "Centers of Excellence" concept to determine if sending all FAOs to three geographically focused centers would benefit the overall program by reducing costs, improving training, and enhancing the quality of life by providing a more stable support structure where FAOs could undertake two or more training phases. When all factors were considered, it came down to better centralized oversight and quality assurance versus producing FAOs with similar developmental experiences. We chose the latter. Foreign Area Officers want, need and arguably, require diversity and independence. They must be adaptable and function comfortably in non-structured environments. This is the key to our success and what has set us apart.<sup>19</sup>

There were several assumptions leading up to this decision that contributed to the failure to accept the center of excellence concept. Modifications to these assumptions could have led to a very different decision.

To begin with, all of the options were based on the current training cycles which provide 6-16 months for BLT and ALT; 12-18 months for ACS; 12-18 months for ICT; and 12-15 weeks for ILE residence. It should be pointed out that there is currently great diversity in the individual training plans of FAO trainees and that no empirical data has been developed to show that these or any other timelines are optimal. The current system is producing trained officers in as little as three years or as long a training period as four and a half years without extensions. It is not unheard of for trainees to extend their preparation time to over the five year mark. There has been no study done to determine whether those officers who were on the shorter training track have performed as well as, better or worse than those with the longer cycles.

Another point of interest when looking at the reasoning behind FAO proponent's rejection of the COE concept is the lack of empirical data pertaining to their assertion that single source entry level FAO ACS would result in an inordinate amount of "group think" which would prove detrimental to performance out in the field. Army Human Resources Command currently acknowledges having no historical data that supports the primary assumption referenced as the

main reason for making the decision to stick with the current structure.<sup>20</sup> There exists no empirical data that evaluates FAO performance in correlation with ACS location. Since the desire to produce officers that are "adaptable and function comfortably in non-structured environments" is put forth as the main reason not to incorporate the COE proposal, one should not only expect but demand hard data to back up the claim that COEs would not meet this requirement. Unfortunately the criteria are almost by definition non-quantifiable. The Army has been sending FAO trainees through the Naval Post Graduate School for decades. A simple look at the performance of these officers could provide such data. Before making significant decisions concerning training programs the Army should know if the driving assumptions are valid or simply "gut feelings."

In order to develop the required data base that is lacking in the above basis for turning back the COE proposal, the Army should pick one of the FAO regions and run a test program to determine validity of these decisive assumptions. The proposed training program and service timeline discussed below addresses the 48E Eurasian FAO program, although similar training programs could be implemented for any of the FAO areas of concentration. Regardless of which FAO area is selected the program (or programs) should run for a five year period in order to feed decisions about changing the entire training system for the Army and possibly the rest of the services. This program is a modification on the aforementioned COA 1 which proposed a Defense Language Institute-Naval Post Graduate School Center of Excellence.<sup>21</sup>

There are some basic overarching objectives which need to be pursued when developing a FAO training program. The Army should strive to produce fully qualified and trained FAOs while simultaneously expending the fewest resources necessary. The resources that should be considered are fiscal requirements, service and family member morale, and time. The following program guidance would produce fully qualified FAOs for less money in only three to four years with increased family stability.

One of the primary tools for the FAO is language proficiency. Historically basic language training (BLT) has occurred at DLI in Monterey. Programs for the various languages have varied from six months for the easiest languages to eighteen months for the more complicated. FAOs traditionally have moved from BLT to ICT or ACS. The problem with these programs is the lack of coordination between phases in the area of language training. Some ACS programs actually have no language provision in the curriculum and the ICT programs are not traditionally coordinated with the BLT. The result is a wide spectrum of linguistic proficiency dependent upon individual programs. One of the key considerations for any future development of FAO

training should be how to coordinate language training in order to maximize proficiency of the final product.

All 48E officers should take their BLT at DLI Monterey for a period of twelve months. This part of the program would be the least changed from the current curriculum. The only modification for FAO officers should be to group them together in a course of study that is specifically designed and targeted for the aptitude of their age group as well as the desired linguistic skill capability (i.e. more emphasis on speaking as opposed to listening which is the primary skill of intercept personnel trained at DLI).

Following completion of the initial twelve month program the FAO trainees should then attend ACS at the Naval Post Graduate School also located in Monterey. This program has several advantages. It is a DOD owned and operated degree producing institute which offers a one year graduate program in National Security Affairs. This not only adds a degree of curriculum flexibility but also allows for simultaneous advanced language training in conjunction with DLI.

This option would allow for significant savings due to lower tuition. Naval Postgraduate School is included by HRC among the "low cost" programs which are in the 0-\$11,000 range. Medium cost schools run from \$11,000 to \$17,000 while high cost institutes are from \$17,000 to \$35,000.<sup>22</sup> If concern is still expressed reference quality of the faculty or variety of academic views, the savings could be put towards the development and maintenance of a world class cadre consisting of a mixture of Title X and visiting professors from throughout the country. This would not be too unlike the programs which already have proven successful at the five Regional Centers where the faculty diversity would be difficult to parallel in most standard universities.

An important omission from the options developed for staffing at the proponent level was that of a detailed review of the In-Country Training (ICT) phase and the potential use of military educational institutes (reciprocal agreements) throughout applicable functional areas of operations. Basically, under the current program, the training cycle ceases to be synchronized a little over one third of the way to completion. In some FAO regional concentrations the last time all officers in that specialty have the same training and preparation experience is at DLI when they participate in BLT. The 48E program takes this further by sending all of its officers to the George C. Marshall Center following DLI but even this only takes them to the half way point of their training experience. This results in disparate, uncoordinated programs which do not take advantage of synchronization nor synergy. Any holistic development product should include an analysis and subsequent recommendation on both the synergetic leveraging of DOD's Regional Centers and the immersion phase of the FAO's preparation, ICT.

After completion of the twelve month ACS program the FAO trainees should then be required to participate in the primary resident security studies at their applicable Regional Center. Eurasian FAOs would go on temporary duty (TDY) to the George C. Marshall Center to attend the current twelve-week Program in Advanced Security Studies (PASS).<sup>23</sup> The Regional Center programs can actually be synchronized with the Naval Postgraduate School's curriculum becoming an integral part of the ACS program of studies, adding substantial exposure to regional specific topics as well as enhancing the quality of the programs. Such a requirement would guarantee exposure to officials from throughout the region of concentration. The academic environments of the regional centers would provide a medium for the exchange of ideas, issues and points of view that cannot be matched in traditional university programs, as well as provide to the officers contacts that would facilitate future operations.

Many of the current FAO programs use attendance in the service schools of foreign countries as the officers' entire ICT. Although this is an excellent method for creating specialists on the particular country in which the ICT is conducted, it offers only limited regional exposure. Including the Regional Centers as an integral part of the training programs (even in lieu of foreign service schools) would produce officers with broader regional expertise.

Attendance at the resident programs at the Regional Centers in a TDY status rather than an accompanied permanent change of station (PCS) would provide two major benefits which are not included in the current program, a cost savings as well as family stability. To begin with, this would eliminate the need for an overseas PCS for all 48E trainees, thus making it fiscally advantageous to the Army as well as increasing the stability of the families involved. Cost could be reduced even further by truly placing them in student status during the course, to include providing billeting and meals which would reduce the per diem reimbursement to only include incidentals.

A major advantage to timing the attendance at the Regional Center in this manner would be that the FAO trainees would attend at the end of their training program and would therefore come to the resident program with greater language proficiency as well as a greater knowledge of the security issues and affairs included in the regional programs. The current system has trainees attending these courses early in their ICT phase and, in the vast majority of the cases, prior to attendance in an ACS program. As with the other students from throughout the region, the FAO trainees should be required to continue to take advanced language training courses at the Regional Centers during course attendance, and they should take the course in their target language. In the case of the 48Es this would be in Russian.

The final step in the training process should be the In-Country Training phase. This should consist of serving in a TDY capacity in pre-determined postings throughout the region. These positions should be designated as permanent TDY billets that will be allocated to key embassies throughout the applicable region. This should be a conscious effort to institutionalize the ICT in order to increase its effectiveness and reduce its current ad hoc nature.

Close coordination needs to occur between the military representatives from all programs represented in the development of these positions. Care should be taken that each will represent the maximum exposure to different aspects of future FAO assignments. There is even the potential to produce cross-discipline positions that would allow for taskings throughout DOD represented entities in U.S. missions under the overall supervision of the United States Defense Representative (USDR).

Again, even at this phase there is the potential for coordination in the area of language training for the trainees. As a matter of course ICT officers are authorized funds to pay for language maintenance instruction but there is currently no coordination with DLI in the areas of both curricula and materials. In order to enhance effectiveness, language training packages that could include texts and other materials could easily be developed by DLI and tailored to individual proficiency by the advanced language training personnel at the Regional Centers. These packages could be forwarded with the officer to the ICT location and used by the local language instructors. Since the positions would under this program be "permanent TDY" slots there is even the possibility of contracting for instructors for extended periods of time.<sup>24</sup>

#### Utilization

After completion of the training described above, the end product would be a junior major with company grade operational experience and FAO training. If the timeline above is adhered to the officer will be in the tenth year of service and have ample time to serve in both an operational capacity and a Foreign Area Officer slot prior to the convening of the Lieutenant Colonels' promotion board. Figure 1 presents a graphic representation of what the above program would entail.

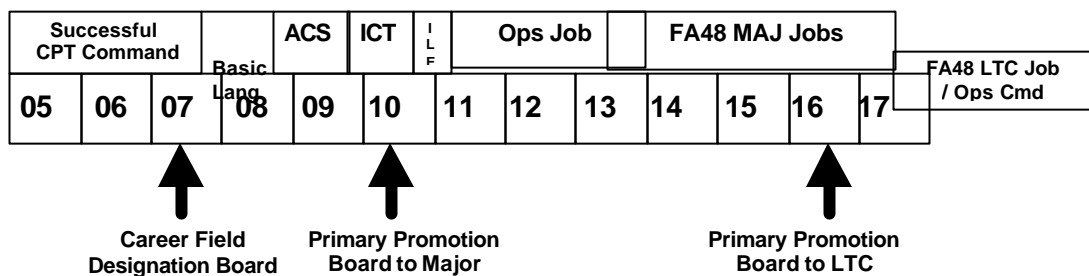


FIGURE 1

The key to making this timeline work well is to ensure that the FAO training program is limited to an absolute maximum of four years, with the best case scenario keeping the average training period around the three year mark. Under the old dual tracking system the training timeline, without credit for prior graduate level schooling or language proficiency, was at a minimum four years and could very easily exceed five.

Injecting culturally savvy and linguistically capable officers back into the operational force between their eleventh and fourteenth years of service would serve the multiple objectives of increasing this desired skillset in the operational force and maintaining required manning levels within the mid-grade officer ranks, while simultaneously "re-greening" our future warrior-statesmen. This services the shortcomings in the current force articulated earlier by both the Army Chief of Staff and the Army G-1. A senior FAO selected early to Colonel commented on the importance of the dual-tracking experience versus the single-track program as follows:

Not having our 04's get basic branch BQ time is a negative. Battalion/Brigade-level assignment as a major is a fundamental experience in the development of a field grade officer. Back-to-back-to-back FAO jobs result in out-of-touch FAOs



who have not had a chance to be tested / learn under pressure-- standards suffer. Some FAOs become fat and lazy. The exception to this rule may be Arabic FAOs who are under most of the time.<sup>25</sup>

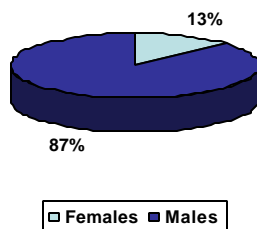
After their operational time these officers would then serve in designated FAO slots until the convening of their Battalion Command Boards. These boards would be the cut for those officers who are not selected for command. They would then serve in back-to-back FAO positions until retirement or separation from service. These positions would also include the "re-greening" FAO slots being pursued by FAO proponent down to the BCT level.<sup>26</sup> Those who are selected to command would continue to bounce back and forth in both FAO and operational assignments. In essence, the CFD decision for a majority of the officers in this program would come at the senior major or junior lieutenant colonel point as opposed to captain.

Although the numbers of officers with the FAO skill designation would have to increase to fill the requirements for FAOs to serve in these additional capacities, the increase would be mitigated by the dual-use nature of these officers. The Army is already considering developing the "Pentathlete" who is in essence the FAO described throughout this paper. Instead of the simply giving officers in the operational forces additional language and cultural skills as well as increased opportunities to attend graduate level institutions, the Army could leverage the FAO training programs and use these officers in multiple capacities. Again, it would be vital that any training program designed to enable this would be completed (to include ILE) in three to four years.

#### Demographics

An unexpected consequence of the current non-dual-tracking program is that the FAO corps is becoming less reflective of the country's (and even the Army's) demographic make-up and trending towards a disproportionate number of white males (Figures 2 and 3). Female officers, who make up approximately thirteen percent of the Army field grade officer corps, comprise only four percent of the FAO positions. African American officers, who comprise a little more than twelve percent of the field grade officer corps, serve in only 2.3 percent of the FAO field grade positions. Since many FAO positions have as part of their inherent purpose representing both the United States Army and Americans in general, this discrepancy requires review.

Army Field Grade Officer Gender Make-up



13

FAO Gender Make-up

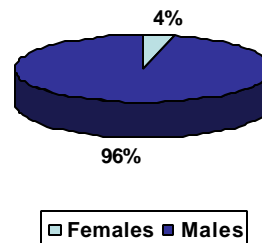


FIGURE 2<sup>27</sup>

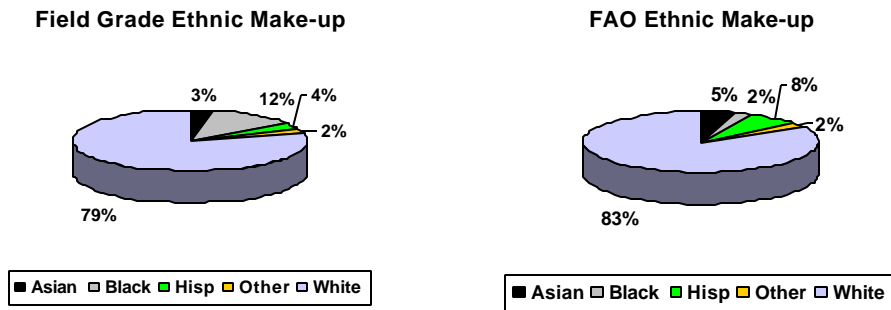


FIGURE 3<sup>28</sup>

One of the explanations for this phenomenon has to do with the early CFD program and the inability for branches to allow their officers to dual-track. For reasons beyond the scope of this paper many of the shortage branches tend to be composed of larger proportions of minority and female service members. Current personnel manning requirements mandate the maintenance of certain minimum ratios of minority and female officers in these branches to be more reflective of the branch's demographic make-up. The unintended result is that those officers who are fortunate enough to be Career Field Designated (CFD) FAO from the shortage specialties (Combat Service [CS] and Combat Service Support [CSS]) tend to not come from these mandated groups (Figure 4). Allowing for dual-tracking would greatly assist in resolving this issue by enabling more minority officers to participate in the FAO programs.<sup>29</sup> Again, it would also serve the dual role of injecting more cultural awareness into the CS and CSS portions of the force.

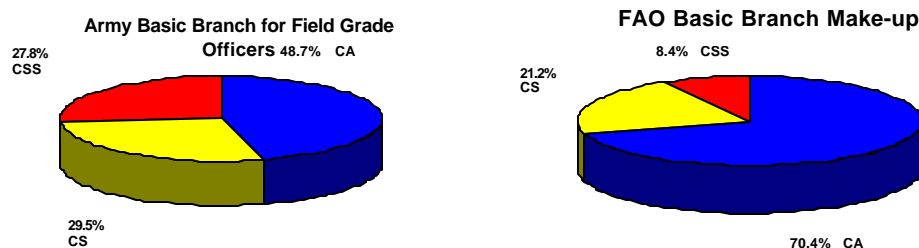


FIGURE 4<sup>30</sup>

### Conclusion

There seems to be little debate that the U.S. Military requires and desires an officer corps that is more culturally and linguistically capable. Our operational Army has produced the finest, most competent warfighters in history comparable in dominance with the soldiers who served in the legions of Rome. In order to not repeat the errors of our Roman counterparts serving on the periphery of their empire in the areas of cooperating with and understanding those in the "uncivilized world," it is imperative that we arm our Nation's warriors with cultural and linguistic savvy, providing the tools to leverage, enhance, and multiply our current military prowess. This would be done not to "separate the Romans from the Barbarians" but rather to have those serving on the limes better perform as diplomats and statesmen. Melding the FAO training program with the Professional Military Education (PME) system of the operational officer corps would be a giant step towards the accomplishment of this goal and would directly address the skills discussed in the February 6, 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review<sup>31</sup>. We would have a FAO officer corps that looks like the Army it represents, is knowledgeable in current Army capabilities and systems, and is able to effectively operate in today's global environment. Of all the recommendations made above, the most important change to the current program should be the reestablishment of the dual-tracking system with the modifications proposed. The other recommended adjustments to the training curricula could be initiated in total or in sequence with the overarching goal being to increase the quality of the end product (a fully trained FAO) while simultaneously keeping the entire period under four years in length. Doing this would produce the "Pentathlete" that is required to face the challenges of the 21st Century.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> The Roman Limes (or Limes Romanus) were a system of defensive posts located on the borders of the Empire to defend against incursions from the "barbarians." Two of the more famous Limes are Hadrian's Wall and the German Limes (a.k.a. Limes Germanicus).

<sup>2</sup> The U.S. Joint Staff, *2005 Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) Special Areas of Emphasis (SAEs)* (Washington D.C.: U.S. Joint Staff, 07 March 2005), 1.

<sup>3</sup> U.S. Department of the Army, Office of The Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3/5/7, Training, "Review of Training, Education and Assignments for Leaders," briefing slides, Washington D.C., 21 November 2005, available from <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/authenticate.do>; Internet; accessed 15 March 2006.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Joint Staff, *Joint Operation Planning (Revision Third Draft)*, Joint Publication 5-0 (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Joint Staff, 10 August 2005), II-14.

<sup>5</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, D.C.: The Pentagon, 6 February, 2006), 19.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 78-79.

<sup>7</sup> Ike Skelton, "Beyond Iraq," remarks to the Dwight D. Eisenhower National Security Conference, Washington D.C., 28 September 2005.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of the Army G-5, Strategy, Plans, and Policy Directorate, "Strategic Multi-skilled Leaders: Transforming FA48/59 to meet Army requirements," briefing slides, Washington D.C., given to author during visit to FAO Proponent on 22 December 2005.

<sup>9</sup> LTC Daniel J. Fagundes, HQDA DCS G-3/5/7, interview by author, 22 December 2005, Washington, D.C.

<sup>10</sup> Anna Scott Tyson, "Army Offers Incentives to Try to Retain Officers," *Washington Post*, 12 February 2006 [newspaper on-line]; available from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/02/11/AR2006021101240.html>; Internet; accessed 15 March 2006.

<sup>11</sup> Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, "21st Century Transformation," speech delivered to the National Defense University, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C., 31 January 2002, available from <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/2002/s20020131-secdef.html>; Internet; accessed 17 December 2005.

<sup>12</sup> In support of this research project the author sent the following email question to all serving Foreign Area Officers (list provided by HRC) from Year Groups (YG) 1985 and earlier. These YGs were selected because the last cohort that served in the dual-track program was 1985. They made their final Career Functional Designation (CFD) decision in 2001. The question posed follows:

Fellow FAOs - In support of a strategic research project at the USAWC I am soliciting answers to the following question from FAOs who fell under the dual track system through at least their major years. Would you have chosen to become a FAO if as an O3 you would not have been able to go back to your basic branch (dual track)? A simple yes or no answer is sufficient but if you have

the time to briefly explain your reasoning that would further assist in understanding. Thanks in advance for your time!

This was an attempt to gather empirical data information that has been alluded to as lacking in the original decisions that were made in the mid-90's reference the future of the FAO program. The responses could be further analyzed to show specific trends but this is not within the scope of this project. Here, however are some general observations. Combat Arms officers seemed to favor the dual-track while shortage branch officers such as MI trended towards single-track. There was also a similar trend between Eurasian and South American FAOs.

Of the 306 queries sent out 144 responded. The breakdown was 70 indicating they would not have chosen FAO if it meant single-tracking from O3 onward in their career. 54 of the respondents indicated that they would have chosen to single-track. The reasons given were evenly divided between having a strong desire to be a FAO, lack of promotion potential in their basic branch, to believing that single-tracking provided for better linguistic proficiency and FAO technical skills.

<sup>13</sup> COL John M. O'Sullivan, President, PEB Lewis, in response to authors question via email, 17 January 2006.

<sup>14</sup> LTC Paul Dececco, Chief, FAO Branch, Army Human Resources Command (AHRC), interviewed by author via email, 12 January 2006, Alexandria, Virginia.

<sup>15</sup> If the Army had done this originally when it was experiencing lower promotion rates for the 48's it may have eliminated the need to conduct the major shift in the program allowing the current operational force to have a significant number of culturally savvy officers already in the ranks.

<sup>16</sup> MG Keith W. Dayton, "Foreign Area Officers Centers of Excellence--Action MEMORANDUM," memorandum for Deputy Chief of Staff, G-3/5/7, Washington, D.C., 28 January 2005.

<sup>17</sup> U.S. Department of the Army G-5 Strategy, Plans and Policy Directorate, "FAO Centers of Excellence: Staffing Concept," briefing slides, Washington, D.C., 18 March 2005.

<sup>18</sup> Dececco.

<sup>19</sup> FAO Proponent, "The FAO Newsletter A Quarterly Pulse from Your Proponent," available from <http://www.fao.army.mil/>; Internet; accessed 10 December 2005.

<sup>20</sup> Dececco.

<sup>21</sup> It should be noted here that the Navy and the Air Force are currently in the process training their FAOs at DLI Monterey and the Naval Post Graduate School.

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Army Human Resources Command, "FY06 ACS Universities by Cost Categories," available from [https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/active/opfamacs/ACS\\_FY06\\_University\\_by\\_Cost\(23\\_Nov\\_05\).xl](https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/active/opfamacs/ACS_FY06_University_by_Cost(23_Nov_05).xl); Internet; accessed 13 January 2005.

<sup>23</sup> *George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies Home Page*, available from <http://www.marshallcenter.org/site-graphic/lang-en/page-mc-index-1/top-mc-news.htm>; Internet; accessed 10 December 2005.

<sup>24</sup> Language instructors at the U.S. Missions are either actually hired by the GSO to provide general support to Embassy personnel or are recommended in a pseudo habitual relationship. The refinement of this process would not be difficult to achieve and could very easily be coordinated through the various Defense Attaché Offices's in the applicable countries.

<sup>25</sup> COL Jeffrey S. Holachek, Army War College Fellow, Atlantic Council, in response to authors question via email, 13 January 2006, Washington, D.C.

<sup>26</sup> It is the current intent of the U.S. Army FAO proponent to increase the number of FAO coded billets throughout the operational force in an attempt to make the functional area more relevant to the operational commanders. Lieutenant Colonel Daniel J. Fagundes (see 6 above) advocates coding such slots in order to keep the FAO force "green." The only point the author would like to add here is that if these FAOs are to be providing advice to commanders at the BCT level and above, their credibility would be significantly increased if they were to have served in an operation billet as a field grade officer under a dual-tracking system.

<sup>27</sup> U.S. Department of the Army G-3, "FAO Demographics," briefing slides, created 01 April 2005, Washington, D.C., given to author on 12 January 2005 via email from US Army Human Resources Command.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> LTC James Turner, HQDA DCS G-3/5/7, interview by author, 22 December 2005, Washington D.C.

<sup>30</sup> U.S. Department of the Army G-3, "FAO Demographics."

<sup>31</sup> U.S. Department of the Army G-5, Strategy, Plans, and Policy Directorate, "Strategic Multi-skilled Leaders: Transforming FA48/59 to meet Army requirements."